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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

Forever God, Lord of the beginning and the end, thank You for being our creator and sustainer. Uphold our Senators as they go forth today to do Your work.

Lord, keep them from the detours that prevent them from making real progress and provide for all their needs. Save them from perplexity and fear as You remind them that everything will pass away, but You are eternal. Help them to avoid every sin and to forsake every source of evil.

Give our lawmakers and all of us who work with them Your strength to endure and Your courage to triumph in things great and small that we attempt for the good of all.

We pray in Your majestic Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON TESTER led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. TESTER thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leader-time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there will be 60 minutes of morning business today, with the time equally divided between the Republicans and Democrats. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 4, and the managers will be here ready to proceed with amendments, which I understand do not require rollcall votes, and also to clear some managers' amendments.

There will be debate on two Coburn amendments until 11:45 this morning, and the Senate will conduct two rollcall votes.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that no second-degree amendments be in order to either Coburn amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, at conclusion of the second vote, the Senate will recess for the regular Tuesday party conferences and then return at 2:15 to continue debate on the remaining amendments to S. 4. Other rollcall votes will occur this afternoon.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

U.S. ATTORNEYS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, let me add to the majority leader's observation that with regard to the U.S. attorneys bill this morning, we have copies of a couple of amendments that will be offered to that bill. That should allow us to go forward with the unanimous consent agreement, as I indicated to the majority leader yesterday, which may allow us to vitiate cloture on that measure.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we agree generally with the amendments. They appear to be reasonable. I think it would be a good way to set this matter aside. We should be able to vitiate cloture. As we speak, the persons interested in the bill are looking at the amendments and, hopefully, the unanimous consent can be done rapidly.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business for 60 minutes, with the time to be equally divided between the leaders or their designees, and with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Washington is recognized.

CONDITIONS AT WALTER REED HOSPITAL

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, by now, most Americans have heard about the appalling conditions at Walter Reed, as exposed by the Washington Post articles. Those stories detailed conditions which not one of us should

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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